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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE

Downtown Delaware Hosts Free Workshops in Feb.

National Retail Expert Margie Johnson among Featured Speakers

DOVER, Del. (Jan. 20, 2009) – Downtown Delaware, a program of the [Delaware Economic Development Office](#), will offer free workshops to community leaders and retailers during the month of February at locations throughout the State.

Downtown Delaware invites community leaders to its third quarterly Feature Presentation, titled “Business Retention: Stabilizing and Enhancing Key Downtown Merchants.” Designed for downtown stakeholders, the presentation features retailing experts, Margie Johnson and Rick Ferrell, who will help attendees learn to identify at-risk businesses and discover proven methods to help retain these businesses in their communities. The presentation will be held simultaneously at University of Delaware locations in Sussex and New Castle Counties on Wednesday, Feb. 4 from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required by sending an e-mail to Zena.Tucker@state.de.us.

With such a Margie Johnson will also speak at training workshops for Delaware retailers as part of DEDO’s “February Focus on Retailers!” Johnson, President of [Shoptalk](#), will inspire retailers with tips and techniques for small businesses with her “Sustainable Success Strategies for 2009.” She will define what independent businesses must do to survive in a volatile economy and in the shadow of the giant retailers. Johnson has more than 30 years of experience as an owner and entrepreneur in the retail world. Her “customer-centered” training sessions and approach to solving business problems have assisted hundreds of clients. These sessions are available to small, women-owned, and minority-owned businesses and downtown representatives. Pre-registration is required. Register by contacting the local Main Street programs listed below:

- Tuesday, Feb. 3 lunch time in Milford: Downtown Milford Inc. 302-839-1180
- Tuesday, Feb. 3 evening in Dover: Downtown Dover Partnership 302-678-2940
- Thursday, Feb. 5 morning in Rehoboth: Rehoboth Beach Main Street 302-227-2772

Finally, Dan Bond, owner of the wildly successful [Ladybug Shop](#) in downtown Milford, will share his pathway to success using “Click and Mortar” Internet retailing to supplement “Brick and Mortar” sales in two additional workshops available to Delaware retailers in February. Bond,

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together with his wife Rhonda, established the LadyBug Shop in downtown Milford in 2003. The store front and “Click and Mortar” business is now the largest provider of ladybug themed gifts on the Internet and is a major contributor to the economic revitalization of historic downtown Milford, Del.

Bond will provide detailed, realistic techniques for implementation of Internet retailing. Pre-registration is required. Register by contacting the local Main Street programs below:

- Saturday, Feb. 7 from 10 a.m. to noon, Milford: Downtown Milford, Inc. 302-839-1180
- Wednesday, Feb. 25 from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., Newark: Downtown Newark Partnership 302-366-7030

These training opportunities have been made available by USDA Rural Development, the Delaware Economic Development Office, and the University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration. They are open to all persons that are actively involved in the revitalization of a Delaware community free-of-charge, but pre-registration is required. Contact Diane Laird at 302-672-6834 or by e-mail at Diane.Laird@state.de.us for more information.

Downtown Delaware, a program of the Delaware Economic Development Office, provides Delaware's historic downtowns, communities, and small businesses with tools to revitalize their commercial districts, increase entrepreneurial opportunity, and enhance quality of place.

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